

Message Text

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67

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSCE-00 NIC-01 SAJ-01 AEC-11 AID-20

CEA-02 CIAE-00 CIEP-03 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 FPC-01

H-03 INR-11 INT-08 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 OMB-01 PM-07

RSC-01 SAM-01 SCI-06 SP-03 SS-20 STR-08 TRSE-00

FRB-03 FEA-02 DRC-01 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15 /170 W

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R 070423Z SEP 74

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2115

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

USLO PEKING

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 9923

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG CH AS

SUBJ: POTENTIAL PRC INTEREST IN FOREIGN HELP IN OFF-SHORE

OIL WORK

REF: PEKING 1299; PEKING 1397 (BOTH NOTAL)

SUMMARY: AN AUSTRALIAN OIL DELEGATION "BELIEVES" A CHINESE OFFICIAL SAID THE PRC MAY AT SOME POINT WANT "HELP" FROM FOREIGN FRIENDS IN ITS OFF-SHORE OIL WORK. "HELP" IS THOUGHT TO MEAN SOMETHING MORE THAN TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT, WHICH THE PRC IS ALREADY BUYING. IF THIS REPORT IS TRUE, THE COMMENTS ARE REMARKABLE AND MAY A STRAW-IN-THE-WIND ABOUT FURTHER CHANGES IN CHINESE ATTITUDES ABOUT THE FOREIGN COMPONENT OF ITS OFF-SHORE OIL EFFORTS. END SUMMARY

1. AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR TO PEKING FITZGERALD TOLD US THAT THE AUSTRALIAN OIL DELEGATION THAT RECENTLY VISITED THE PRC (REFTELS) "BELIEVES" IT WAS TOLD THAT THE PRC MAY, AT SOME
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POINT, WANT "HELP" FROM FOREIGN FRIENDS IN ITS OFF-SHORE

OIL WORK. IT WAS FELT THAT "HELP " MUST MEAN SOMETHING MORE THAN TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT BECAUSE PEKING IS ALREADY ACQUIRING THEM. FITZGERALD WAS TOLD BY THE DELEGATION THAT THE STATEMENT WAS MADE BY THE CHINESE OFFICIAL DURING THE DELEGATION'S WRAP-UP AT THE MINISTRY OF FUELS AND CHEMICALS INDUSTRY.

2. FITZGERALD'S DESCRIPTION WAS CRYPTIC, FURTHERMORE, HE ATTRIBUTED THE VIEWS TO THE DELEGATION AND EVEN CAST DOUBT ON THEM BY HIS USE OF THE VERB "BELIEVES". BY HIS TONE AND PHRASING, THOUGH , HE DID SEEM TO SHARE THE VIEW THAT "HELP" MEANT SOMETHING MORE THAN TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT. IN HIS VIEW, IT WAS BOTH SIGNIFICANT AND REMARKABLE THAT A CHINESE OFFICIAL MIGHT GO SO FAR AS THIS IN HIS REMARKS ABOUT PEKING'S ATTITUDE AND, PARTICULARLY, ITS FURTHER POLICY DIRECTION.

3. IF THE REMARKS WERE MADE AND ACCURATELY REPORTED, WE AGREE THAT THEY ARE REMARKABLE AND ARE PERHAPS A STRAW-IN-THE-WIND ABOUT FUTHER CHANGES IN CHINESE ATTITUDES ABOUT THE FOREIGN COMPONENT OF ITS OFF-SHORE OIL EFFORTS.

4. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ACTION ADDRESSEES CAN DEVELOP REGARDING DELEGATION'S VISIT AND REMARKS BY CHINESE OFFICIAL REPORTED ABOVE.

5. FOR USLO: FITZGERALD'S REMARKS CAME AT THE CLOSE OF A LONG DISCUSSION WITH MYSELF AND SEVERAL OTHER CONGEN OFFICERS YESTERDAY, AND THERE HAS BEEN NO OPPORTUNITY TO FOLLOW IT UP YET. WE WILL, HOWEVER, BE TALKING WITH ROSS COTTRILL, WHO WAS PRESENT, AGAIN NEXT WEEK. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT FITZGERALD WOULD HAVE BEEN WILLING TO EXPAND ON HIS ACCOUNT, BUT TIME SIMPLY DID NOT PERMIT IT.
CROSS

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